

Message Text

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ACTION INR-10

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8028

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 1691

FOR INR/RNA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, PLO, ET
SUBJ: PLO REPRESENTATION IN ETHIOPIA

REF: (A) STATE 091578; (B) ADDIS ABABA 1096

1. MARCH 8, 1978 GOVT-OWNED AND CONTROLLED ETHIOPIAN HERALD REPORTED THAT PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO) WOULD OPEN AN OFFICE IN ADDIS ABABA AT AN UNSPECIFIED DATE IN FUTURE. FOREIGN MINISTRY (MOFA) DECISION TO PERMIT PLO OFFICE IN ADDIS FOLLOWED FIVE-DAY VISIT TO ETHIOPIA MARCH 1-5 BY HIGH-LEVEL PLO DELEGATION AT DIRG INVITATION. SUBSEQUENT TO MOFA DECISION, MAJOR FIGHTING BROKE OUT IN SOUTHERN LEBANON AND PLO HAS NOT YET ESTABLISHED OFFICE IN ETHIOPIA.

2. BECAUSE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNIT (OAU) SECRETARIAT IS LOCATED IN ADDIS ABABA, ARAB LEAGUE HAS REPRESENTATIVE AND OFFICE ATTACHED TO OAU. HOWEVER, AL REP HAS BEEN RESIDENT OF ADDIS FOR LONG TIME AND IS NOT PLO PROXY. THERE HAVE BEEN OCCASIONAL VISITS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF PFLP AND PLO TO ETHIOPIA FOR SPECIAL EVENTS SUCH AS INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY, ANNIVERSARY OF ETHIOPIA'S REVOLUTION, ETC., BUT
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THESE VISITS HAVE BEEN BRIEF AND FOR SPECIFIC REASONS.

3. THERE IS SHORT TERM PROSPECT THAT ETHIOPIA WILL GIVE INCREASING VOCAL SUPPORT TO PLO AND ITS COMPONENT ELEMENTS AND MORE FORCEFULLY ESPOUSE PALESTINIAN CAUSE IN INTERNATIONAL FORA. RECENT COMMUNIQUE WITH CUBA AND SOVIET UNION HAVE SUPPORTED PALESTINIAN

CAUSE UNRESERVEDLY, INCLUDING CALL FOR GENEVA CONFERENCE, TOTAL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORY AND NEED FOR PALESTINIAN HOMELAND. ETHIOPIA APPEARS TO BE PURSUING THIS POLICY FOR PRESENT BECAUSE OF SELF-INTERESTS IDENTIFIED IN REFTEL B. MATHERON

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